



Teresa Conerly, RN

Why did you choose psychiatric/mental health nursing?

"When people feel understood, they feel good about expressing themselves". As a psychiatric/mental health nurse I provide a holistic approach to patient care. Interventions are not just based on mental health issues, but comprehensive assessment skills are practiced. This is why I chose psychiatric/mental health nursing. Providing care for the overall well being of individuals.

Please provide a brief description of what you do. As a Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse also proficient in medical, surgical, community health and wound care management with advance knowledge in trending technological devices. Skills include assessing and providing care to homebound patient i.e. physical and psychiatric co-morbidities, educating patient/families, medications and treatments, and collaborative management. Presently, I am employed at Optimal Care Inc., Michigan.

Please describe your role in the health care team in the region/organization/community where you practice psychiatric/mental health nursing.

As a psychiatric/mental health nurse, I have acquired a wide knowledge in patient care, from providing a

comprehensive assessment of homebound patients, educating on disease process, medication/treatment, collaboration with healthcare team to resolving a variety of crisis situations for patients/families with challenging experiences/situations. Highlights of Contributions: formulation of diabetic foot care brochure, development of stoplight-teaching tool for management of foot care in home. Led staff development training programs, educational inservices on a broad range of topics, including dementia care/managing behaviors, wound care management, and diabetic education.

What do you consider to be the most challenging and most rewarding parts of psychiatric/mental health nursing?

Most challenging part is helping people with depression, schizophrenia, Bipolar disorder, anxiety and other conditions sort through difficult circumstances and challenging experiences patient/families who have no one to talk with about their situation. Most rewarding part is to see the change in behaviors, self care management skills and seeing patient/family "light up" after telling their story and sharing their feelings.

What advice do you have for nursing graduates who are considering psychiatric/mental health nursing as a career?

There's no typical day for psychiatric/mental health nurses. Psychiatric/mental health nursing is suited for nurses who want to engage in the community, and nurses who want to move into a career that offers a lot of opportunities i.e. Home Health care, hospitals, corrections, community mental health clinics, long term care facilities, and helping the homeless population.

What advice do you have for nursing graduates who are considering psychiatric/mental health nursing as a career?

Education! Education! Education! Psychiatric/Mental health nurses/students practicing/pursuing careers in the profession must enhance their skills/knowledge by attending events that provide information on mental health issues and specific drug therapy.